Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended)   A method for embedding information in an image so that the image will have different information when the image is reproduced by a scanning or printing process, the method comprising the steps of:

embedding digital information in an image of a postal indicia;

printing the embedded digital information and the image to produce an original printed image;

scanning the original printed image to obtain a digital image of the embedded information and the image;

determining the signal strength of the original printed image; and

comparing the signal strength of a printed image with the signal strength of the original printed image to determine whether or not the printed image is a copy of the original printed image.

2.   Cancelled.

3.   The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the image is a graphic.

4. (currently amended)   The method claimed in claim 1, wherein [a bit map file is created for] the original printed image is created from a bit map file.

5. (original) The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the comparing step further including the step of:

measuring the signal strength of the original printed image to set a threshold value for the original printed image and copies of the original printed image.

6. (currently amended)   The method claimed in claim 5, whereby if the signal strength of [a]the printed image is greater than the threshold value, then the printed image is the original printed image.

7. (currently amended)   The method claimed in claim 5, whereby if the signal strength of [a] printed image is less than the threshold value, then the printed image is not the original printed image.